

WASHINGTON, DC - Rep. Charlie Wilson (OH-6) joined miners and other coal supporters on Capitol Hill today to rally in support of the coal industry. The miners traveled from Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky and Pennsylvania to attend the bipartisan "Stand Up for Coal" event. After speaking at the rally, Wilson announced his support for a new piece of pro-coal legislation. H.R. 6113, the Electric Reliability Protection Act, would stop the EPA's regulation efforts which are effectively trying to put coal mines out of business.

"The Sixth District runs from the outskirts of Youngstown down along the Ohio River all the way to Portsmouth," Wilson told the crowd. "Make no mistake about it, I'm from coal country.

In Ohio, 86 percent of our electricity comes from coal. And the vast majority of that coal comes from my area of Appalachian Ohio. Coal makes it possible for Ohio residents to turn on our lights and to heat our homes. I firmly believe that coal is our most affordable and abundant energy resource, so coal must and will play a major role in our nation's transition to energy independence."

Wilson went on to tell the crowd that he was proud of his "no" vote on last year's Cap and Trade bill. "It was bad for consumers and bad for coal jobs. Our country needs coal and our communities need the good paying jobs that coal provides."

Wilson added that during these tough economic times, it is up to Congress to provide the resources needed to get people back to work rather than taking those resources away. If our ability to mine and use coal is compromised, it will cost Ohio and all of coal country good paying jobs that support our communities.

"This is why I have consistently supported legislation that would stop the EPA's efforts to impose excessive regulations on our coal mines," Wilson said.

H.R. 6113 would prohibit the EPA from executing new regulatory guidance until going through the formal rule-making process, thus allowing for appropriate public comment and discourse.

This legislation was prompted by the EPA's recently implemented standards for surface mining in six Appalachian states which have caused significant barriers and delays in issuing job-creating coal mining permits.

"I always vote for the best interests of my district, and coal is definitely in our best interest," Wilson said.

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